

Washington, DC- Vice-Chairwoman of the U.S. House Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues Rep. Gwen Moore (WI-04) released the following statement today on the House passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act:

"The passage of these two important pieces of legislation is a significant step in combating historical discrimination against women in the workplace.

"Unfortunately, as a result of a 2007 U.S. Supreme Court ruling we saw the deterioration of laws that sought to ensure fair treatment in the workplace. Under the 2007 ruling, the Supreme Court ruled that a complainant only has 180 days from the first incident of discrimination, regardless of when they eventually discover their employer's discriminatory actions, to file a complaint. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act will restore the law as it was prior to the Supreme Court decision and clarify that each paycheck resulting from a discriminatory pay decision would constitute a new violation of employment nondiscrimination laws, just so long as a worker files charges within 180 days of a discriminatory paycheck. Therefore, this bill will help ensure that employers who discriminate do not escape responsibility by running out the clock. We must ensure that discriminatory practices do not go unpunished simply because companies are able to conceal their illegal practices until it is too late to take action.

"Regarding paycheck fairness, in my state of Wisconsin, women with a college degree still make on average considerably less than men with the same amount of education. Since the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963 we have seen the wage gap between men and women narrow. Sadly, there is still a significant disparity in pay between men and women. On average women only make 78 cents for every dollar a man makes and over a lifetime the disparity will cost women anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million in lost wages. If passed by the Senate and signed into law, this bill will give women access to remedies available under other claims of discrimination and protect employees who discuss salary information from retaliation by their employer. The Paycheck Fairness Act will go a long way in helping to identify and combat pay discrimination in the workplace. With the cost of energy, higher health insurance, and a disproportionate amount of single-family homes headed by women we must ensure a person regardless of gender is paid a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. This is not just a civil rights issue: it's a survival issue for women workers providing for their family's food, rent, and heat."

Congresswoman Gwen Moore is an original co-sponsor of both bills.

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